

United States Department of the Interior
National Park Service

For NPS use only

National Register of Historic Places
Inventory—Nomination Form

received

date entered

See instructions in *How to Complete National Register Forms*
Type all entries—complete applicable sections

1. Name

historic Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station

and or common N/A

2. Location

street & number Amity Street between East Fifth and East Sixth Avenues N/A not for publication

city, town Homestead N/A vicinity of

state Pennsylvania code 042 county Allegheny code 003

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input type="checkbox"/> object	N/A in process	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	N/A being considered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> industrial
		<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> other: Vacant

4. Owner of Property

name George Portokalis

street & number 412 McKinley Street

city, town Munhall N/A vicinity of state Pennsylvania

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. Allegheny County Office Building

street & number Ross Street

city, town Pittsburgh state Pennsylvania

6. Representation in Existing Surveys

title Allegheny County Survey has this property been determined eligible? yes no

date 1979-1984 federal state county local

depository for survey records Pennsylvania Historical and Museum Commission

city, town Harrisburg state Pennsylvania

7. Description

Condition		Check one	Check one
<input type="checkbox"/> excellent	<input type="checkbox"/> deteriorated	<input type="checkbox"/> unaltered	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> original site
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> good	<input type="checkbox"/> ruins	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> altered	<input type="checkbox"/> moved date <u>N/A</u>
<input type="checkbox"/> fair	<input type="checkbox"/> unexposed		

Describe the present and original (if known) physical appearance

The Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station and its roughly rectangular lot are sited on a narrow tract of land which lies between two railroad right-of-ways. The former Pittsburgh, McKeesport, and Youghiogheny Railroad, now part of the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad, runs northwest of the property which fronts on the four tracks of the former Monongahela Division of the Pennsylvania Railroad, now part of Conrail. Amity Street abuts the property on the northeast. The Homestead Works of the United States Steel Corporation separates the railroad-related land from the Monongahela River.

The station property is located two blocks from Homestead's commercial district, and is oriented to face the town while paralleling the railroad. The lot drops slightly to the northwest, and the station building is raised at the rear on a concrete podium, with a brick-paved parking area below. The podium is also paved in brick and has a pipe railing on the northwest and southwest sides.

The station is comprised of a main rectangular block and a rectangular extension to the southwest. A square tower projects from the center of the main block. The bulk of the station is a single story, but the tower rises an additional story. All portions of the building are topped with hipped roofs. Shallow roofs with widely overhanging eaves compress the perceived height of the majority of the structure and emphasize its horizontality, while the steeply sloping tower roof, with eaves flush at the walls, affirms the tower's contrasting verticality.

The station is of brick construction, but is ringed by a slightly beveled stone base and a stone sill course, which doubles as a watertable. There are brickwork quoins at the corners. The tower divides the facade into wings, each of which has a doorway near the tower and paired windows. Doors have three panels and three horizontal panes; windows are single sash with either one or six panes. Doors and windows have transoms and wooden surrounds which consist of flanking Ionic pilasters and heavily molded entablatures.

The side elevations have paired windows, and the rear elevation reflects that of the facade. But where the rear has a central pair of windows, the facade accommodates the projecting tower whose central element is again a pair of windows, but here under a rounded arch. The arch has a vertically divided window, and a decorative central console. The projecting sides of the tower each have a single small window with a diamond-paned transom under a blind rounded arch with a keystone.

The tower also features brickwork quoins at the corners, which meet a corbeled frieze with corbeled brick arcading. The tower roof has dormers on all four sides with scrollwork wood surrounds, diamond-paned sash, and rounded arch roofs.

The rectangular extension to the southwest is recessed slightly from the facade and the rear of the remainder of the building. It has paired shipping doors, front and back, with triangular panels and beveled edge diagonals, transoms, and hood moldings. The floor level of this extension is flush with the ground level, although the rest of the building is one step up. A basement is accessed only from a rear exterior stairway.

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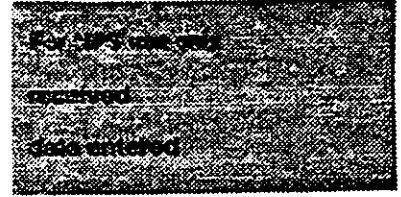
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All of the station's roof surfaces are of orange Spanish tile. Roof joints have tile coping. This richly textured surface is the building's most visually striking feature.

The station interior has a basic tripartite plan, with the shipping room extending to the side. Two large waiting rooms fill the wings, flanking the central core. This center area consists from front to back of a public room at the base of the tower, the ticket office, and two lavatories. The ticket office has a shelf and ticket window which opens into the tower room, and side openings under flattened elliptical arches, at least one of which was outfitted with a counter with drawers.

There are wood floors throughout. All walls, except in the tower room, have wainscoting of thin wooden boards and a chairrail. Windows and a variety of paneled doors have simple wood surrounds. The ticket window has a vertically sliding sash. The sides of the ticket office, under the arches, are framed in pilasters with simple moldings. Both waiting rooms have a crown molding which is the springing point for broadly arced coving which rings the room and terminates in a ceiling molding. The tower room has a slightly higher coved ceiling without moldings; the wood framed roof space is not open and is accessible only through a ceiling trapdoor.

The southwest waiting room, which seems to have been the primary one, has a central fully circular radiator and two semi-circular radiators on the side wall. A bench, safe, and plumbing fixtures also remain in the building.

The station exterior has been largely restored and is in excellent condition. The rather unlikely looking dormers were restored to a form shown on a historic photograph. On the interior, the northeast waiting room and the shipping room have been partitioned into additional spaces, and part of the shipping room is paneled. The ticket room has been enclosed on one side, and the counter on the other side has apparently been reversed in orientation. All of the interior changes, however, are reversible.

8. Significance

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
prehistoric	archeology-prehistoric	community planning	landscape architecture	religion
1400-1499	archeology-historic	conservation	law	science
1500-1599	agriculture	economics	literature	sculpture
1600-1699	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> architecture	education	military	social
1700-1799	art	engineering	music	humanitarian
1800-1899	commerce	exploration settlement	philosophy	theater
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1900-	communications	industry	politics government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		invention		other (specify)

Specific dates 1906-07 Builder Architect Pennsylvania Railroad Company

Statement of Significance (in one paragraph)

The Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station is significant for the role which it played in local transportation, its representation of the extensive railroad history of its community, and its distinctive architectural design. Homestead developed as a residential and industrial community largely because of the railroad, and this station is a symbol of the commitment of both the Pennsylvania Railroad and the community to high-quality railroad facilities. The building's design marks it as a prime product of architectural Eclecticism as employed in the service of the railroad.

Homestead Borough was initiated and laid out in a plan of lots by the Homestead Bank and Life Insurance Company beginning in 1871. The first houses were built the following year. Local steel manufacturing began in the 1880s, and by the early twentieth century the borough population reached 20,000.

One of the first and most important agents of growth in Homestead was the Pittsburgh, Virginia, and Charleston Railroad which was laid through the fledgling town along the Monongahela River in 1872. The PV & C was a regional railroad largely controlled by the Pennsylvania Railroad. The line's purpose was two-fold: to provide the Pennsylvania with a line into the coal-rich and rapidly industrializing Monongahela Valley; and to provide a link between the Pennsylvania's Panhandle line south of Pittsburgh and its main line east of Pittsburgh, so freight trains could bypass a tunnel through the center of the city.

The PV & C was built to Homestead in 1872, and was extended to Monongahela City in 1873 and West Brownsville in 1881. The main line link was completed in 1877. In 1879 the line was leased by the Pennsylvania Railroad and became known as the Pennsylvania's Monongahela Division.

The PV & C line eventually paid extensive dividends for the Pennsylvania, but its most immediate effect was to connect the new community of Homestead with Pittsburgh and encourage its development. Both freight and passenger service were put into operation. When steel manufacturing interests came to Homestead and the town began to boom, the railroad was in place to serve both mills and commuters. A passenger station was situated at the same site as the present building as early as 1873, and by the end of the decade passengers could board trains for Pittsburgh and the west, Monongahela Valley points to the south, and Johnstown and points east.

The Pittsburgh, McKeesport, and Youghiogeny Railroad, later acquired by the Pittsburgh and Lake Erie Railroad, early established a competitive line parallel to the PV & C, and the Union and Wabash Railroads eventually also impacted the community. Turn of the century local newspapers gave extensive coverage to railroad affairs, particularly to service and safety concerns. The PV & C in particular was the subject of much attention because of numerous accidents at unprotected grade crossings.

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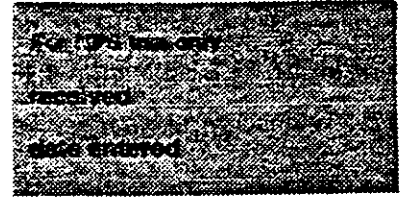
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Two pivotal events occurred in 1905: the Pennsylvania Railroad formally acquired the PV & C; and the Homestead Borough Council passed a so-called Railroad Ordinance which demanded that the Pennsylvania erect safety gates at grade crossings and hire watchmen. Preliminary versions of the ordinance also requested a new passenger station within two years. Meanwhile, the Pennsylvania developed its own plans for its newly acquired line including both yard and station improvements in the face of similar improvements by the P & LE and the anticipated arrival in the valley of the Wabash.

The Railroad Ordinance eventually ran into legal problems, but for a time the Pennsylvania complied, and local pressure and the railroad's own interests shortly led to new freight and passenger stations. Plans for the new passenger station were publically submitted in March of 1906, contracts were let in June of 1906, and the station opened on January 12, 1907.

The new station was designed at Pennsylvania Railroad headquarters in Philadelphia, but the specific in-house architect is unknown. The Homestead Lumber Company was the contractor and erected the building at a cost of approximately \$35,000. The station was asserted to be the "finest in the Monongahela Valley" and "...The Handsomest Passenger Station on the Line, Built of Brick and Stone, With Tile Roof and Large Enough to Accomodate Traffic for Years to Come." It was acclaimed for its large size, modernity, and convenient arrangement of plan including a general waiting room, ladies waiting room, ticket office, toilet rooms, and baggage room.¹

The Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station is the most important railroad station surviving on any line in the lower Monongahela Valley. The only other railroad building that remains in Homestead is a nondescript former P & LE station from c. 1930. Aside from terminal stations in downtown Pittsburgh, the Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station is rivaled only by two other railroad stations in Allegheny County--the P & LE's Coraopolis station and the Wilksburg Pennsylvania Railroad Station, both presently listed in or eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places. These three stations form a summary continuum of late nineteenth and early twentieth century railroad architecture in suburban towns of moderate size. The Homestead station is temporally and stylistically in the middle. It shares the central tower and dominant hipped roof of the Richardson Romanesque Coraopolis station of 1895, but its detailing is akin to the neo-Classical Wilksburg station of 1915-16.

The Homestead station is, then, a transitional design, striving equally for picturesque effect and Classical dignity. The door and window surrounds with their Ionic pilasters are distinctive and definitively Classical. But it is the broad orange tile roof and the rather baroque detailing of the tower which stand out.

The station served as a community focal point for many years, and was actually sited more at the center of town before a large residential area close to the river was cleared during World War II for steel mill expansion. Here newcomers arrived in the community, workers came and went to their jobs, young men went to war, and circus and vaudeville troupes brought entertainment to town. Commuter service ceased, however,

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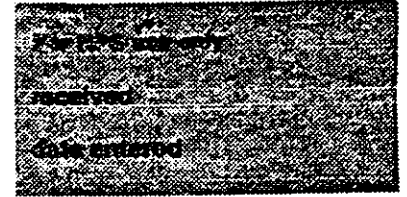
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by the early 1960s. The station eventually became the property of Conrail, and was then sold to a private owner. It awaits reuse.

Aptly sited in a maze of railroad tracks between Homestead's commercial district and steel mills, the Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station is a distinguished survivor of Homestead's--and America's--"Railroad Age."

- 1 Articles, The News-Messenger (Homestead, Pa.), March 22, 1906, June 28, 1906, and January 10, 1907.

9. Major Bibliographical References

Surgess, George H. and Miles C. Kennedy. Centennial History of the Pennsylvania Railroad Company. (Philadelphia: The Pennsylvania Railroad Co., 1949.) pp. 495-497.

"Contract Let for Passenger Station," The News-Messenger (Homestead, Pa.), June 28, 1906, p. 1.

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property .25

Quadrangle name Pittsburgh East

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UTM References

A 17 | 592240 | 4473400
Zone Easting Northing

B | |
Zone Easting Northing

C | |

D | |

E | |

F | |

G | |

H | |

Verbal boundary description and justification

The nominated property consists of Allegheny County block and lot 130J-125. This includes the Homestead Pennsylvania Railroad Station and the land immediately surrounding it.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

state N/A code N/A county N/A code N/A

11. Form Prepared By

name: title Martin Aurand; Director, Preservation Research

organization Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation date 7/23/85
450 The Landmarks Building

street & number One Station Square telephone (412) 471-5808

city or town Pittsburgh state Pennsylvania

12. State Historic Preservation Officer Certification

The evaluated significance of this property within the state is:

national state local

As the designated State Historic Preservation Officer for the National Historic Preservation Act of 1966 (Public Law 89-665), I hereby nominate this property for inclusion in the National Register and certify that it has been evaluated according to the criteria and procedures set forth by the National Park Service.

State Historic Preservation Officer signature _____

title Dr. Larry E. Tise, State Historic Preservation Officer date _____

For NPS use only

I hereby certify that this property is included in the National Register

date _____

Keeper of the National Register

Attest:

date _____

Chief of Registration

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Homestead Borough file. Pittsburgh History & Landmarks Foundation.

"New Station to be Opened to the Public Saturday," The News-Messenger (Homestead, Pa.),
January 10, 1907, p. 1.

"Plan Submitted for New Station," The News-Messenger (Homestead, Pa.), March 22, 1906,
p. 1.

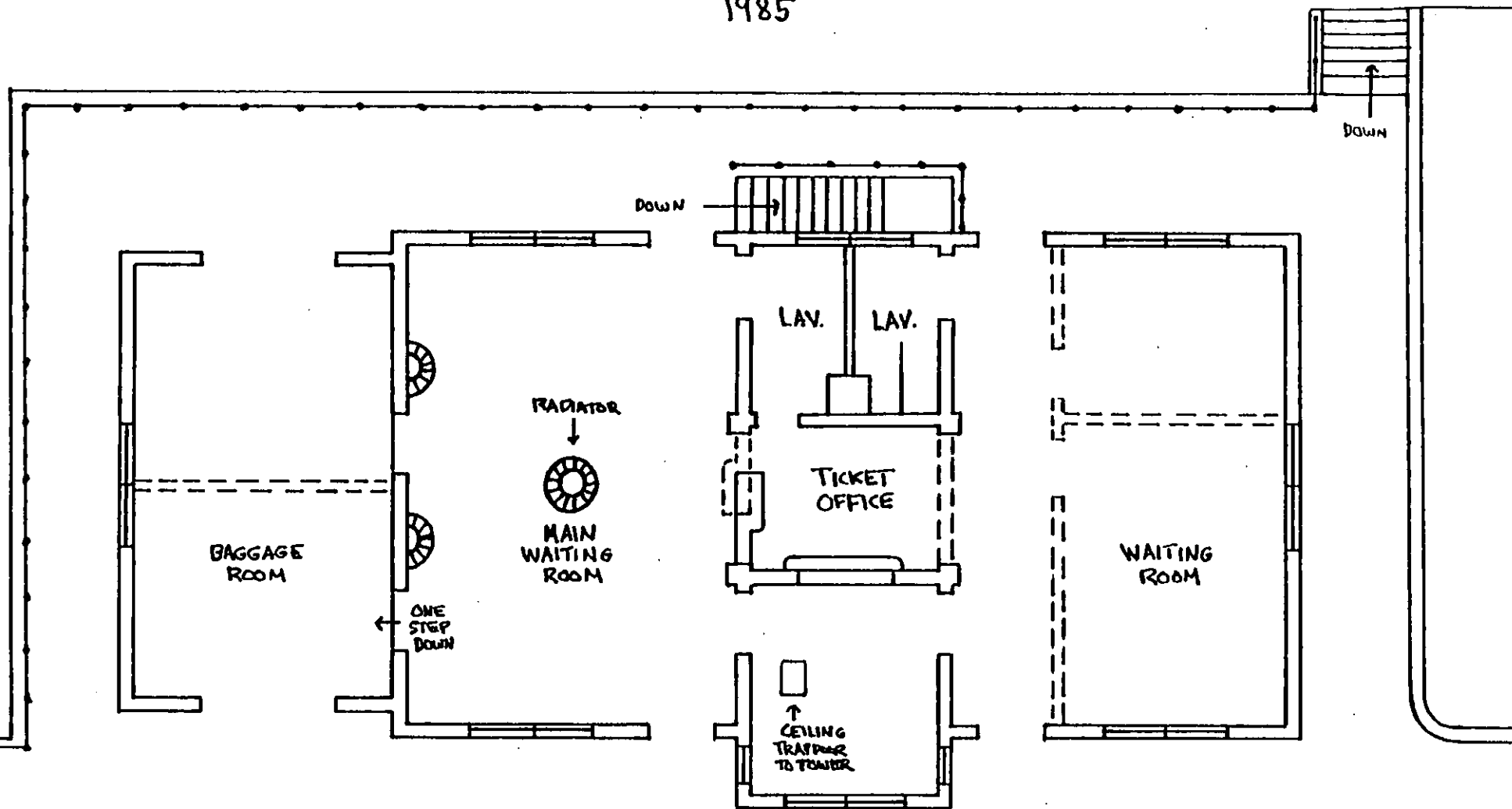


HOMESTEAD PENNSYLVANIA RAILROAD STATION

ALLEGHENY COUNTY

1985

--- ALTERATIONS



P.R.R. RIGHT-OF-WAY